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HISTORICAL MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM DODD, L.L.D.

FROM HIS

Entrance at CLARE-HALL, CAMBRIDGE,

In 1745,

To his fatal EXIT at TYBURN,

JUNE 27, 1777.

If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd.
The wisest, greatest, meanest of mankind!

POPE.

We are astonished a man can deliver such sentiments,
and act such a life.—*Dr. Dodd on Stern's Sermons in the
Christian Magazine 1766, p. 504.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for FIELDING and WALKER, No. 20, PAR-
noter-row.

ADVERTISEMENT.

To supersede some spurious accounts that have been offered to the public, one who has long been acquainted with the unhappy subject of them has been induced to draw up the following, in which scarce any thing is asserted but from personal knowledge or the most authentic information. While Dr. Dodd had life and hope, tenderness and humanity forbade the discussion: Now, his sensibility cannot be hurt by it, and to survivors it may serve as a beacon to point out the rocks on which he was unfortunately wrecked and lost.

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June 28, 1777. 5. 9.
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HISTORICAL
MEMOIRS, &c.

DR. William Dodd, the eldest son of the Rev. William Dodd, M. A. many years vicar of Bourn in Lincolnshire, was born there in the year 1729, and, after being educated at a private school, was admitted a sizar of Clare-hall, Cambridge, under the tuition of Mr. John Courtail, (now archdeacon of Lewes) in 1745. Handsome, genteel, and elegant in his person, he sacrificed to the Graces no less than to the Muses; and though he was entered of the lowest order, in dress

* He has one brother, the Rev. Mr. Richard Dodd, vicar of Cowley, in Middlesex, and Lecturer of Camberwell, and a sister, the relict of Mr. Porter, upholder, in Long Acre.

and appearance, few of his superiors could surpass him. Yet, attentive as he was to outward accomplishments, and too fond of pleasure and dissipation, being, in particular, "a zealous votary (as he ludicrously expressed it) of the god of dancing, and being in return distinguished by the favour of those fair priestesses who presided at his mysteries," by the help of a lively imagination, a retentive memory, and close application, he displayed his talents to advantage in every collegiate and academical exercise for his first degree. During his residence at Cambridge, he published (without his name) in 1747, "A Pastoral on the Distemper among the horned Cattle;" in 1749, "The African Prince, now in England, to Zara at his father's Court," and "Zara's Answer;" in 1750, "A Day in Vacation at College," a mock heroic poem in blank verse; abridgments of "Grotius *de jure Belli et Pacis*," and of "Clarke on the Being and Attributes of God," with Sir Jeffrey Gilbert's abstract of Locke on the Human Understanding *, all in-

* Entitled, "Synopsis compendiaria Librorum Hugonis Grotii, de jure Belli et Pacis S. Clarkii de Dei existentia

inscribed to Dr. Keene, then vice-chancellor of the university, now Bishop of Ely; and "A new Book of the Dunciad, occasioned by Mr. Warburton's edition of the Dunciad complete," with notes, &c. of which that editor, with very little propriety, but much abuse, is made the hero, King Cibber being dethroned, and is supposed to be crowned by two reverend favourites, the late Dr. Brown, the estimator, and a now right reverend prelate:

As Hur and Aaron held up Moses' hands.

About the same time our young adventurer published proposals for a translation, by subscription, of the "Hymns of Callimachus, the Fragments of Orpheus, &c." from the Greek*, and wrote a tragedy, with

existentiâ et attributis, et J. Lockii de intellectu humano."

* On this occasion the following verses appeared in the papers:

"To Mr. DODD,
On his intended Translation of CALLIMACHUS, &c.

"O THOU, who, with a happy genius born,
Can'st tuneful verse in flowing numbers turn,

with chorusses, called "The Syracusan *." On his taking the degree of B. A. in 1749-50, his name had the honour to appear in the list of Wranglers. But soon after this, quitting the university, and unadvisedly removing to the metropolis, he entered largely into all the gaieties of the town, taking lodgings in Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, and being a constant frequenter of the theatres, Ranelagh, and every other place of fashionable resort. Occasional supplies to answer these expences, were afforded him by the book-

Crown'd on thy Lincoln plains with early bays,
Be early wise, nor trust to barren praise.
Soon by thy hand shall Orpheus' lyre be strung,
And Grecian hymns by English damsels sung.
If Britain these translated songs would hear,
First take the gold—then charm the list'ning ear:
So shall thy Libyan † father smile to see
His genius meet its just reward in thee;
And own his verse to thine in culture yields.
As much as Afric's wilds to Europe's fields."

* He is also said to have been the author of a comedy on the characters of the *Spectator's* Club, called "Sir Roger De Coverley," and that it is now in the hands of Mr. Harris of Covent-garden theatre. Mr. Miller (author of the "Man of Taste," &c.) had a plan of the like kind.

† Callimachus.

sellers,

sellers, "not the worst patrons and rewarders (as a distinguished writer expresses it) of literary merit;" though we do not recollect any piece that then appeared with his name, except an "Elegy on the death of the Prince of Wales," for which five guineas were given him by the late Mr. Watts, the printer, who also advanced him a much larger sum in part of an hundred to be paid for the copy of his tragedy, when acted, it being then in the hands of the managers; but on his entering into orders, he returned the money, and withdrew his play. Now and then, it may be added, he preluded, as it were, to the pulpit by exercising his oratorical talents in defence of christianity, at the Robin-hood society; and once, on an alarm of fire being given by some sparks falling down the chimney, though the room was up two pair of stairs he was with difficulty prevented from throwing himself from the window.

A remarkable æra in his life now approaches. Much to the surprise and concern of his friends, who little thought that he would have married for love only, and knew that he might have married

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advantageously; on April 15, 1751*, he very hastily entered into a matrimonial connection with Miss Mary Perkins, a young lady who then lodged in Frith-street, Soho, and who, whatever were her personal attractions, was certainly deficient in those of birth and fortune†. All his views at Cambridge were thus at once defeated. And to complete the measure of his imprudence, destitute as he was of all resources but what his pen afforded, he

* Dr. Dodd's memory must have deceived him, (and at such a juncture, it is no wonder that it should) if he said in his defence at the Old Bailey, as printed in the sessions paper, p. 118. (and here in the appendix) that he had "a wife, who for *twenty-seven* years had lived an unparalleled example of conjugal attachment and fidelity," &c. as the time of his marriage (mentioned above) is well remembered in St. Anne's parish, and may be ascertained by this circumstance, that it happened during the general mourning for the Prince of Wales, and the bride and bridegroom appeared in colours. The elegy on his Royal Highness's death was published before.

† Her father, we have been told, was one of the vergers of Durham Cathedral, having been a domestic in the family of the Rev. Sir John Dolben, one of the prebendaries. Her sister, the wife of Mr. Warcup, cheesemonger in Cary-street, died lately, the papers say, of a broken heart: But this we pretend not to warrant.

immediately took and furnished a house in Wardour-street, dancing on the brink of a precipice, and thoughtless of the morrow. The distress of his father, at his coming up to London on this occasion, and finding his son thus prematurely settled, may easily be conceived. To retrieve such a step, or rather such a stumble at the threshold of life, no common abilities were required. Never was their exertion more necessary, and (for a long time, at least) they were exerted with success. Quitting before the winter, by his father's injunction, his house in Soho, he was ordained a deacon by the Bishop of London, (and, as soon after as his age admitted, * a priest) and fixed his abode at Plaistow in Essex, as curate to the Rev. Mr. Wyatt, Vicar of West Ham. On the death of the Rev. Mr. Finch, Lecturer of that parish, in 1752, Mr. Dodd was so approved by the parishioners as to be chosen his successor, having soon obtained great popularity as a preacher, partly owing to his pathetic delivery and composition, and partly perhaps to the ingenious mysticism of Mr. Hutchinson, of whom he was then a zealous disciple. This by many was styled

* In 1753.

See Morgan's Life of Cyprian

and mistaken for methodism, a supposition, which, besides his public and parochial labours, his expounding the scripture also in his own house by no means contributed to remove. It must, however, be confessed that he was truly diligent in his vocation, and seemed actuated by a proper sense of his duty, which, with a social but innocent vivacity, could not but recommend him to the esteem and respect of his neighbours. There he laid the foundation of many valuable connections that were signally useful to him in his future life. There, had he been contented, he might have been happy. And this place, after he had left it, he mentions as "ever dear and ever regretted" by him, "there (says he) I was useful, and there I trust I was loved*." Soon after his appointment to this lectureship, he published "The Beauties of Shakespeare selected," in two volumes, octavo: And turning his studies into a more profitable channel, and having a house well suited to the purpose, he took several young gentlemen of fortune under his tuition, which soon enabled him not only

* Dedication of his "Sermon on Popery" in 1768, to the [late] Earl of Chesterfield.

to retrieve his affairs, but to indulge himself (not very prudently, perhaps) in the luxury of a chariot. To his lectureship in Essex, one in London, that of St. James's Garlick-hithe, was added in May 1753, which he quitted, on being elected to that of St. Olave's Hart-street, in April 1754. His two preferments he easily made compatible by supplying the Sunday duty of the one church in the morning, by exchange with the vicar, and that of the other in the afternoon—not alternately, as has been suggested*. In the same year an anonymous novel, in two volumes, 12mo. entitled "The Sisters, or the History of Lucy and Caroline Sanson, entrusted to a false friend, (printed for Waller, who also published his "Shakespeare,") gave no very favourable idea of the purity of his mind, or the rectitude of his judgment, to those who knew that he was the author of it, as many of the scenes there described, which, like the inns and night-cellars of Fielding and Smollett, can only be drawn from the life, notwithstanding

* "Biographical anecdotes of Dr. Dodd" in the Westminster Magazine for March 1777, in which are many other mistakes which we shall not particularise.

the specious gawze of morality affectedly thrown over them, are painted with a warmth of imagination and a luxuriance of colouring, which cannot but be dangerous to the young and susceptible, as tending rather to inflame than correct the passions, and being much more likely to seduce than to reform. "The false friend," Dookalb, who is represented as a tempter "black as Satan," and is at length conducted to the gallows, was understood to be intended for one who had given the author a heinous provocation, and Beau Leicart [Tracey] Miss Repook [Lucy Cooper] both since dead, and other characters of that stamp, besides a noble Lord who shall be nameless, were also well known and easily discovered by all who were conversant with the town. In a very different light our young and popular preacher was at the same time displaying his talents to Bishop Secker, Miss Talbot, and the public, at Lady Moyer's Lectures at St. Paul's, where, from the visit of the three angels to Abraham, and other similar passages of the Old Testament he endeavoured to prove the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity. The "Hymns of Callimachus," &c. from the Greek, long promised to his

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subscribers, were now printed in quarto, with notes, which, from the then mystical system of the translator, exhibited a heterogeneous mixture of heathen mythology and Hutchinsonian jargon. The first sermon that we recollect of Mr. Dodd's publishing was entitled "The Sinful Christian condemned by his own Prayers," from Luke xix. 22, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant;" preached in October 1755. This was succeeded by "The Nature and Necessity of Fasting," preached at his lectureships in February 1756. In September following he began a course of sermons, of which he published three, "On the Wisdom and Goodness of God in the Vegetable Creation," before the worshipful company of Apothecaries, very ingenious and worthy of the subject. That the author himself had a good opinion of them may be seen by his own character of the first, as printed in the Christian Magazine*. In February 1758

* Though this discourse contains the finest instruction, though every part of the subject is moralised in the most beautiful manner, yet, from the trifling complexion of the times, we fancy it will be a greater encouragement to the purchasers, when we recommend

1758 he gave the world his "Thoughts on the glorious Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ," a poetical essay written at Southampton the year before. But here all his poetical spirit evaporated, and was lost in ebullitions of zeal for St. Athanasius. In the same year (if we mistake not) he took the degree of M. A. at Cambridge. On June 11 he preached, and afterwards printed, a sermon "On the People's Duty when the Host is gone forth against the Enemy," a fleet and army being then just sent to the coast of France; and about the same time collected in four volumes, oc-

it as affording the highest entertainment. Besides the pleasure the author gives, he discovers an extensive knowledge of the subject he has chosen, he seems to have previously qualified himself by reading the best authors who have treated upon Botany, and even the skilful in that science may receive some hints worthy their notice.

"His style is at once elegant and nervous, neither careless, nor yet affected; sufficiently open and diffuse for the pulpit, yet neither tedious nor redundant in the closet; in short, such a style as we would recommend to the imitation of those young divines who would desire to instruct without being tedious, and who would acquire [popularity without meanness." *Christian Magazine for June 1760.*

It was not then known that the author was his own panegyrist.

tavo, his course of "Sermons on the Parables and Miracles," before published separately. On the former we cannot but observe, that his spiritualizing many of them, in opposition to their plain and common meaning, tends rather to puzzle than instruct, and is an evident perversion of the intention of our blessed master, who designed them, like his discourse on the mount, as lessons of morality, not of speculative divinity; as lessons that might be read without a comment, and not only read, but practised. Of the benevolent institution of the Magdalen-house, established August 11, 1758, it is well known that Mr. Dodd was one of the first and most active promoters, and after its establishment he constantly preached at the chapel every Sunday evening in the winter to crowded congregations, (for which he was allowed by the governors one hundred pounds a year,) and twice preached and published their anniversary sermons, besides one (in the chapel) before the late Duke of York, with "An Account annexed of the Rise, Progress, and present State of the Charity, their Rules, Hymns, &c." of which there have been five editions. In the summers, indeed, "for the recruiting his

his health and spirits," as he expressed it *, he was usually seen at some watering-place, Southampton, Margate, &c. indulging his genius in studies less serious and severe, of which his pastorals, and many other poetical effusions, published and unpublished, were the fruits. In 1759, it appears by a note on his sermon "On Unity," before the religious societies in and about London, at Bow Church, that he had renounced his Hutchinsonian principles, and adopted, on conviction, a more rational system. At this time, if a prophet commissioned from Heaven had revealed to Mr. Dodd *the evil that he would do to society*, the scandal that he would bring on his character and profession, had exhibited, in particular, the crime of forgery, with all its heinous and dreadful consequences, the Compter, the Old Bailey, Newgate and Tyburn, shocked at the suggestion, he would, no doubt, have exclaimed with Hazael, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing †?" or with Peter, "If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise †. How little the

* Preface to his "Moral Pastorals."

† 2 Kings viii. 13. † Mark xiv. 31.

prince, the disciple, or the preacher knew themselves, it is painful to reflect.

A new edition of Bishop Hall's "Contemplations, Life, &c." being published this year by Mr. Dodd, with a dedication to the late excellent Miss Talbot, it gave such offence to her paternal friend Archbishop Secker, that, after a warm epistolary expostulation, his grace insisted on the sheet being cancelled in all the remaining copies. This anecdote rendering it curious, it is added here:

"Madam,

"The character of the good bishop, the fame of his writings, and the subject and excellence of the present in particular, are such, that, as I could not doubt of their acceptableness to you, so neither could I think of any person to whose patronage I could commit them with so much propriety. The spirit they breathe, and the great truths they inculcate, shine so amiably in your life and conversation, that, while I am so happy as to be able to point to your example, I am giving the most convincing proof of reality of that piety our worthy bishop is recommending.

"To

“ To descant on his writings, or enlarge on his character, would be useless to you, madam, who, I doubt not, are so well acquainted both with the one and the other; and that more especially as you live remarkably blest in having daily before your eyes a lively copy of piety as exalted, sanctity unaffected, and labour as unwearied as shone in the life of good Bishop Hall. If we, in general, think ourselves happy in having so great and shining a light at the head of our church, how happy must you be in the friendship and daily converse of a prelate, who has so eminently distinguished himself in every public, who is so truly amiable in every private office!

“ That you, madam, may long live to enjoy this felicity, and long be, as you are, a blessing to many; and that we may long enjoy the light of his grace of Canterbury's shining example, is the sincere wish and prayer of, &c.”

However just the encomium and striking the resemblance, his grace's displeasure at the mode of conveyance was no surprise to any of his friends.

From the year 1760 to the end of 1767 (as long as it was continued) Mr. Dodd
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superintended and contributed largely to "The Christian Magazine," for which he received from the proprietors one hundred pounds a year. "A Conference between a Mystic, a Hutchinsonian; a Methodist, a Member of the Church of England," &c. though published without a name in 1761, was generally understood to be by the same hand.

In the Bishop of St. David's, Dr. Ellis, he lost, as he says, a friend to whom he had been introduced by Bishop Keene, as appears by the following lines:

—"Thou, my muse, couldst also boast
Of him, fair candour's patron, who may well
Claim this just tribute to the friend he gave:
Noble munificence to give a friend;
And such a friend! how rare the boon! of him
Whose winning, mild humanity will deign
From then to take this little cypress wreath,
Woven by gratitude, and wet with tears,"
And hang it on his Ellis's lov'd urn!

From his successor, however, he experienced more solid services, as a prelude to which, Bishop Squire, soon after his advancement to that see, appointed him

"On the death of the Right Rev. Anthony Ellis, D. D. &c. to the Lord Bishop of Chester."
Dodd's Poems, p. 71.

one of his chaplains. Nor was Mr. Dodd ungrateful (however misjudging) for this distinction, though we pretend not to warrant the following supposition. In January 1762, soon after the death of Bishop Hayer, a letter appeared in one of the papers strongly recommending to his Majesty and his ministers the Bishop of St. David's as the properest person to succeed to the see of London. This letter, at the time, was generally ascribed to his lordship's chaplain. The vicarage of West Ham, a crown living of three hundred pounds a year, becoming vacant by the death of Mr. Wyatt, Mr. Dodd gave the earliest intimation of it to the Earl of Hertford, to whom, as president of the Magdalen-house, his character and talents were well known, and solicited his interest with the minister: but in vain; his lordship chose rather to employ it in favour of his own chaplain, Mr. Traile. Equally disappointed was Mr. Dodd in 1765, when, this gentleman being promoted to an Irish bishoprick, Mr. Warner succeeded to West Ham. Nor was he more successful in his other parish, St. Olave's, that living, on a vacancy, being given by the trustees to Dr. Owen, the present

sent worthy incumbent, at the recommendation of the Duke of Newcastle.

In 1762 our author gave the public "A familiar Explanation of the poetical Works of Milton," and in 1763, "Reflections on Death," "first retailed," say the monthly Reviewers, "in the Christian Magazine, and now collected into a volume to frighten his Majesty's subjects with dismal ideas of death and horrible pictures of damnation." To these a dedication was prefixed (little more judicious, and no more successful, than the former) to the Earl of Bute. By the recommendation of Bishop Squire, the late Earl of Chesterfield, his lordship's parishioner at Greenwich, entrusted Mr. Dodd with the education of his godson Philip Stanhope, Esq*, whom he had taken and adopted, the only son of his kinsman Arthur Stanhope, Esq. of Mansfield, heir to the title but not to the estates, for which the Preceptor had two hundred pounds a year, with leave to take two other pupils. This, which he then blindly deemed the most fortunate circumstance in his life, turned out, eventually, the most unhappy. Such is human foresight! A

* The present earl. His father was then living.

prebend of Brecon was soon after given him by the Bishop, in order to enable him, on the falling in of the lease (which was soon expected) to make some provision for his wife. Whether he made this prudential use of it his subsequent conduct, always improvident, leaves too much room to doubt. In April 1764 appeared his "Comfort for the Afflicted under every Distress," chiefly compiled from Bishop Hall's "Balm of Gilead," and Dr. Grosvenor's "Holy Mourner." And in May he accompanied the Bishop of St. David's in his annual visit to his diocese, and resided with him some time at Abenguilly, a journey which the new-installed Prebendary described in verse*, with the warmest effusions of gratitude to his patron, to whom also he addressed "An Ode written in the Walks at Brecknock†. At his return from Wales he collected and published, in two volumes, octavo, some essays, serious and humorous, which he had inserted separately in the Public Ledger under the title of "The Visitor." In the

* This, with many more *jeux d'esprit*, is still in manuscript.

† See it in his "Poems," p. 196.

succeeding winter, by the interest of some of his city-friends, Mr. Dodd was appointed one of his Majesty's chaplains. On this occasion, one instance of that eccentricity which ever marked his character, will long be remembered at St. James's. November was his month of waiting: this melancholy season and the chaplain's gloomy apartment, he determined to enliven by the society of some of his female friends. At "the rustling of silks and the creaking of shoes," for which he could find no precedent, old Groves the table-decker, stood aghast, the maids of honour could not suppress their smiles, and his more serious brethren were by no means edified; so that there needed not the Lord Chamberlain's interdict to make all succeeding chaplains think the custom,

"More honour'd in the breach than the observance."

In 1766 Mr. Dodd took the degree of L. L. D. at Cambridge. In the same year he published a new edition, in quarto, with improvements, of Mr. Locke's "Common-place Book to the Bible," generally known to young divines by the name of

"The

"The Sermon-mill." On the death of his patron, Bishop Squire, he paid a grateful tribute to his memory, and offered "Mutual Knowledge in a future State" as an argument of consolation under the loss of friends, in a sermon on 2 Sam. xii. 23, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." As a disinterested proof of his gratitude, which here speaks (if ever) to and from the heart, we will insert the dedication prefixed to Mrs. Squire*.

"Madam,
"In great affliction, there is a time when the attempt to console only aggravates distress, and the language of pity serves but to increase the soul's anxiety. The lenient hand of time, and the calm persuasions of our divine religion, will alone produce that acquiescence in the disposals of Providence, which is the immediate duty, and the truest consolation of human creatures.

"It is on this account, that I have so long forborne the tender office I now un-

* This lady died in April 1771.

dertake,

dertake, of condoling with you on our mutual loss: a loss, great indeed to me; yet very small, in comparison to what you have sustained. I have lost a valuable, and never-enough to be esteemed friend; but you, Madam, in that friend have lost an husband, and your children a father, as excellent, I may truly say, without derogating from any man's merit, as ever yet was called by those affectionate names.

“The sincere and pleasing friendship, in which you, Madam, and our dear Bishop so happily lived together, must render, I am persuaded, that argument of consolation which I have presumed to offer, peculiarly affecting and satisfactory. It is, it will be the joy of your future life, to look back, with a tenderly painful remembrance, on what is past, to look forward with a joyful, well-grounded hope to the blissful hour which shall restore you to HIM in heaven, whom you so faithfully loved on earth.

“With a constant view to that desirable period, you will continue to exert those offices of love towards the surviving pledges of your affection, which were the delight of you both while Providence blessed you together; and for which he hath rendered you

you more amiably capable, in some measure, to supply the defect of so worthy a father's counsel and prudence.

“ I know it would delight you to see, I am sure it would no less delight me to draw, if I were able, the true and lively picture of his character, whose name and memory must for ever be dear to us. His social virtues as an husband, a father, a relation, a friend, a master, those who best knew him will always most admire and praise: Alas! Madam, we think, with anxious concern, of the exquisite sensibility of his affectionate heart*.

“ His learning and abilities appear from his writings; and we hope you will suffer them to appear still brighter by indulging the world with some of those learned and elaborate performances which he hath left behind? Have we not reason to apprehend that his indefatigable application to labours of this kind, was one cause of hastening that loss which we must ever deplore?

“ As a parish-minister, he was exact and conscientiously diligent in the discharge of

* The Bishop's death was supposed to be owing to the anxiety he suffered on account of the illness of one of his children.

his duties; manly and engaging in the pulpit; and ever ready in private to discharge the meanest offices of his function. In his episcopal station, no man exerted himself more, during the short period he filled that high office. Zealous to reform all abuses in the extensive diocese over which the providence of God called him to preside, and which he visited constantly, making it his labour to know its true state, and to consult, by all means in his power, for the advancement of our holy religion in it; careful to seek out and to promote, without any solicitation on their part, promising and capable young men; many of whom, in the little space he enjoyed the bishopric, have been advanced by him: nice in his examinations, cautious in his admission to orders, and anxious to repel every person of unbecoming character and conduct from the sacred function: hospitable to a degree beyond most of his predecessors; though some, of the noblest nature, and most generous disposition, have not long since preceded his lordship in that diocese: easy, affable, and polite in his manner; always studious to give the conversation some learned and useful turn, and treating his clergy with such engaging con-

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descension,

descension, that it was difficult to say, whether they left his presence most filled with respect or affection. In short, in public life he was exemplary, in private life amiable; a stedfast friend, a sincere Christian, and a truly loyal subject to a prince, whose virtues it was always his pleasure to recount; as it was his peculiar honour to have received the earliest marks of his royal favour.

“ It is with a melancholy satisfaction that I pay this little tribute, and drop this grateful tear over the good Bishop’s memory; which I must ever honour. For I could sooner forget myself, than the pleasing distinction he gave me; than the friendly intercourse we lately enjoyed so happily together; than the favours which he bestowed upon me, in so fatherly, so obliging a manner. For what his lordship said of one of his * patrons was equally true of himself; “ so kind and obliging was his manner in conferring favours, that it added a double pleasure to the receiver.”

“ Happy shall I think myself, if any attention on my part can ever prove acceptable to you, Madam, and your beloved

* Archbishop Herring.

little family. Duty and gratitude will always demand from me the sincerest attachment: and while we continue sometimes to reflect together on the great, the, in some measure, irreparable loss we have sustained, let us, at least, be thankful for the comforts we have enjoyed, support ourselves with a great consolation, that a good and merciful Providence is over us,—a gracious and Almighty Father, who, when judging it right, will remove us from every affliction, and give us to our friend, to himself, to endless and uninterrupted felicity.

“ I am, Madam,

Southampton Row,

O^c. 18, 1766. with the truest regard, &c.”

It should before have been observed, that Dr. Dodd, having now quitted West Ham, had taken a house in the street above mentioned*, which he elegantly furnished, and also a villa at Ealing, had exchanged his chariot for a coach, to accommodate his

* He afterwards removed into Queen-street, Westminster, and lastly into Argyle-street.

pupils, and being so fortunate as to gain one thousand pound prize in the lottery, embarked it with a builder, in a new chapel at Pimlico, near the palace of the Queen, from whom it took its name. Of this the emoluments arising from the pews were considerable. To enable himself to attend it, he resigned one of his lectureships, and sometime after quitted the other, on his entering into a like partnership at Charlotte Chapel, Bloomsbury, which he and Dr. Trusler, with the consent of Mr. Palmer, the Duke of Bedford's principal steward, agreed to rent of Mr. Norris the builder. But all these expences so far exceeding his certain and visible income, could not but raise apprehensions in his more prudent friends. In 1767 he made a collection of his "Poems," in an octavo volume, of which the most recent and striking are six "Moral Pastorals," improvements on Gesner, all subservient to the cause of virtue, which were composed in his summer excursions to the Isle of Thanet, &c. This volume he inscribed "to the Memory of his worthy Parents *," whose partial fond-

* His mother died May 21, 1751, aged 55, and his father August 8, 1756, aged 54, happily removed from the evil to come!

ness (he says) encouraged, but whose wife, solicitous, and ever-valued care enabled their son to far better pursuits than this *idle trade*;" concluding his address with this apostrophe, "Best of parents, we shall meet again!" About this time Lord Chesterfield, in a letter to Bishop Chenevix, says, "My young man [our Doctor's pupil] turns out prodigiously well, both in parts and learning, and gives me a great amusement in superintending his education, and in some things instructing him myself, in which I flatter myself that I do some good, considering his future rank and fortune." An elegant painting of the Salutation, in Charlotte-street Chapel, copied from La Fosse, having occasioned some malevolent insinuations in the news-papers, as if the Doctor favoured popery, he preached therein 1768, a very seasonable and rational discourse, which he also published, with a dedication to the Earl of Chesterfield on the subject of these attacks, at which his Lordship, he says, "a man confessedly of the best head and heart," had been "pleased to smile" with him, and to deliver nearly the same sentiments as to popery. It should, however, be remembered, that his Lordship's letters to his son had not then appeared,
and

and those to his young legitimate heir breathed a very different spirit, the Earl being too thorough a master of his art to disclose his improvements in gallantry and hypocrisy, either to the Bishop of St. David's or his chaplain. "These letters," says Dr. Maty, in his late Memoirs, "have not yet appeared under any sanction of authority, but the principle of them is so noble, and the end proposed so worthy of a great name, that it is to be hoped they will not always be withheld from the public." That the dross should have been given us, and the gold denied, is indeed unaccountable and much to be lamented. In 1769 Dr. Dodd translated and published some "Sermons on the Duties of the Great," from the French of M. de Maffillon, Bishop of Clermont, preached before Lewis XV. during his minority, and inscribed them to the Prince of Wales. Admired as this prelate was as an orator, and instructive as a moralist, many of his tenets, as to church-authority and civil government, were much better suited to the meridian of Versailles than that of St. James's. Our preacher, it seems, when he fitted up his chapel near the palace, had flattered himself with the hopes of having
some

some young royal auditors, and had accordingly assigned a particular pew or gallery for the heir apparent. But in this, as in many other of his views, he was disappointed. On this publication, the Rev. Mr. William Scott, the modernizer, or rather burlesquer, of Martial, addressed the following Ode to him.

“ MEEK, humble, modest, parson Dodd !

Believe me, it is mighty odd

That you such hopes should dish up :

For after all, my good friend Will ;

Whate’er you think, you will be still

A priest, but not a bishop.

The * parties which you try’d to fix,

Of ladies (monstrous thus to mix !)

To grace the chaplain’s table :

Carnal with spiritual thus to join !

Flounc’d petticoats with gowns divine !

O fie ! ev’n that’s not able.

Another † string you’ve try’d to touch,

Which if it serves your purpose much,

The

* This heavenly-minded and spiritual divine, gentle reader, laboured hard, not a great while ago, it seems, to introduce a polite custom of having ladies at the table for the King’s chaplains ; not forgetting the excellency of a famous old Roman adage, somewhat transposed, “ *Sine Venere frigent Ceres et Bacchus*.”

† Another step taken by him to raise himself to the purple, is his late publication of a French Bishop’s sermons ;

The world might justly wonder :
Thus did Salmoneus rattle o'er
The brazen bridge, to make it roar
Like Jove's imperial thunder.

Of French translations we've enough,
And all such meagre, flimsy stuff,
Both sacred and profane :
But what will suit proud Louy's court,
Should not to George's here resort,
As all such preaching's vain.

Marillon's pen flows much too fine,
In polish'd periods every line,
To stand the British test :
The heart of George will never bow
To French discourses, since we know
We have by far the best.

Thus while you warn a prince's ear
Of specious flattery to beware,
You gild the Gallic pill
In such a manner, as to suit
Your honest views with George or Bute ;
And so farewell, dear Will !"

Dr. Kenrick, some time before, had thus
strangely characterised him,

———"that mild man of God,
The reverend doodle Doctor Dodd."

Epistles to Lorenzo.

mons ; when we have such an amazing plenty, and
profusion of our own, so very justly and deservedly ac-
knowledgeed to be infinitely superior to any in the known
world.

Nor

Nor could he escape the lash of that poetical Drawcanfir, Charles Churchill, of satirical memory: witness the following:

“ ——— to Wellclose-square
Fine fresh young strumpets (for Dodd preaches there)
Flock for subsistence.” ———

Times.

But to return: In March 1770, his pupil, Mr. Stanhope, lost his father, and his uncle Sir Thomas (a captain in the royal navy, and colonel of marines) died three days after, which occasioned the earl's saying, “There seems to be an infectious distemper in the house of Stanhope: I suppose I am too old and too tough to take the infection*.” In September a great work, in which our author had been engaged several years, and which was published in numbers, was completed, in three volumes folio, under the title of “A Commentary on the Books of the Old and New Testament;” a work undoubtedly of merit, but of which Dr. Dodd “scarcely considered himself in any other light than that of a bare collector.” The manuscripts of Mr. Locke, preserved in the library at Oates,

* In one of his letters published by Dr. Maty.

among which were two bibles interleaved, with observations, were communicated to him by the late Lord Masham; as was a similar Bible of Dr. Waterland's, in which he had corrected our version throughout, by the late Dr. Askew. From what quarter "a curious manuscript of Lord Clarendon's, containing remarks on the sacred books, written in his own hand," was obtained, is not specified. And the Bible of Dr. Beaumont, formerly Divinity Professor at Cambridge, was furnished by the Rev. Mr. Tenant, of Iden in Suffex. But as to this, and also Mr. Locke's Bible, the editor owns that his expectations were disappointed. In this work he soon takes occasion to inform us, that he is no Hutchinsonian: when having mentioned Mr. Parkhurst's Hebrew-English Lexicon, he writes as follows: "I should be extremely happy to produce more frequently the authority of my learned friend, from his ingenious Lexicon; but truth is superior even to friendship; and not being able, after the most impartial examination, to agree with him in sentiment respecting the Hutchinsonian system, upon which his work is built, I can only recommend it as a performance of as great industry as ingenuity, and in which, I am persuaded, the

author has delivered what are the sincere and genuine dictates of his honest heart." It is remarkable that this Bible, though published (complete) in 1770, has a dedication, without a date, indeed, to Bishop Squire, who died in 1766.

About this, time a young lady of fortune in the city, who had contracted an intimate friendship with Mrs. Dodd, being sensibly hurt by some reflections on her character, which we choose not to discuss, thought it her duty to communicate them, with the name of the person who uttered them, to her friend. In consequence of this, the indignant husband threatened a prosecution, but was persuaded to compromise it on the gentleman's agreeing to pay fifty pounds, which the Doctor gave to his favourite charity, and entered it in the books as so much "paid for a defamation." Such was Miss F.'s attachment to her female friend, that, we are assured, she rejected an unexceptionable offer rather than dissolve it; and when it was soon after dissolved by her own death, she left Mrs. Dodd all her jewels. In one of their excursions to

† See some verses to this lady in his "Poems," p. 183.

Margate, the Doctor and his wife now extended their tour to the continent, and visited Paris, Versailles, &c.

In 1771 appeared his "Sermons to Young Men," in three small volumes, 12mo. suggested, one would imagine, by those of Dr. Fordyce "To Young Women," had not the author assured us, that "many of them were written before that work was published." They were dedicated to two of his pupils, Philip Stanhope and Charles Ernst, Esqrs. of whom he writes in the following terms: "Let me flatter myself, my dear young friends, that, whatever may be the fruits of my written labours, society will have cause to applaud these labours with regard to you; that, fraught with every noble sentiment, you will, the one in an exalted, the other in an inferior, but, it may be not less useful station, endeavour to excel and shine forth as friends to mankind." To the *inferior* this distinction so marked must have been a little painful. And near the conclusion, "Should Heaven," says he, "extend my little span, to see those lives happy and honourable, excelling in virtue, abounding in reputation; to see you what all your friends so ardently wish, and what, all their care so
justly

justly claims, I could then, with as much sincerity and satisfaction as the famous believer of old, beg a dismissal from this world, and close my eyes with peace and thankfulness." On this let the reader make his own reflections. In 1772 Dr. Dodd, in a sermon which he preached in one of his chapels, set on foot a subscription, and gave rise to the laudable society for the relief and discharge of prisoners confined for small-debts, a circumstance which does great honour to his benevolence, in which he was never deficient. And we know who says, "*Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.*" It should also be remarked, that a note in one of his sermons, recommending a charitable provision for the blind probably suggested that munificent and most humane institution, which the Rev. Mr. Hetherington, a second *Man of Ross*, some time after established. Mr Stanhope, being seventeen, was now sent to the university of Leip-sick, under the care of M. D'Eyverdun, a Swiss gentleman of great merit*. In the same

* So say Lord Chesterfield, in his "Letters," and Dr. Maty, in his "Memoirs;" but neither by them take

same year Mr. Dodd obtained the rectory of Hockliffe in Bedfordshire, worth about one hundred and sixty pounds a year, the first cure of souls he ever had, and which he is said to have purchased with a sum raised by granting an annuity on his life. With this he held the vicarage of Chalgrove and the two were soon after consolidated. Remarkable is the subject on which he intended to have preached this year at St. James's chapel, but omitted it on account of the absence of the court during his month of waiting. The substance of it, however, he gave the public in a little tract, entitled, "The frequency of capital Punishments inconsistent with Justice, sound Policy, and Religion:" a subject, in which it was little thought that the preacher himself would soon be

taken notice of Mr. Stanhope's *English Tutor*, for a reason that may be guessed; though that the late Earl had and expressed a partiality for him, cannot be doubted. It has even been whispered, that his lordship recommended him to his Majesty as a proper preceptor for the Prince of Wales. Be that as it may; had he been lodged in a palace instead of a prison, his name and merits, as well as those of the *travelling Swift*, should doubtless have appeared in the Earl's printed (as well as manuscript) letters.

nearly

nearly interested both as a prosecutor and a convict. As a prosecutor he was unfortunately called upon to appear early in the succeeding winter against one William Griffiths for robbing him and his wife near Pancras, on their return from his living, and discharging a pistol into the carriage, which, happily, (as it was then thought) only broke the glass. For this being tried and convicted, on their evidence, at the Old Bailey, the highwaymen was executed at Tyburn January 20, 1773. On the death of the Earl of Chesterfield March 24, Philip Stanhope, Esq. (as lineally descended from the first Earl) succeeded to his titles,* and by will inherited his estates. Having an allowance of two thousand five-hundred pounds a year to finish his education, he was then sent by his guardians (the Earl of Huntingdon and Sir Charles Thompson) from Leipfick to Geneva; Italy, "the foul sink of illiberal manners and vices," as well as Newmarket, being expressly prohibited by his predecessor's will. And soon after he appointed Dr. Dodd his

* Sir William Stanhope, the Earl's brother, died the year before, by which his patrimony of eight thousand pounds a year reverted to his lordship.

chaplain. Notwithstanding the scandalous aspersions in a certain magazine, in which he was introduced in a *Tête à tête* under the title of "The Macaroni Parson*," admired as a preacher, and esteemed as a man, by many of the great, the worthy, and the wealthy, the Doctor was now in the zenith of his popularity, we will not say prosperity, as nothing surely but distress of circumstances and infatuation of mind could have driven him to the unaccountable step we are now to mention: a step, which first opened the eyes of the public to his real character, and alienated many of his former friends and followers. The valuable rectory of St. George's, Hanover-square, having fallen to the disposal of the Lord Chancellor (by virtue of the King's prerogative) in February 1774, on the translation of Bishop Mosa, the former incumbent to the see of Bath and Wells, a most extraordinary offer of three thousand guineas was made to Lady Apsley, in an anonymous letter, if Dr. Dodd could be presented to the living. The letter being traced, and its origin as-

* Appendix to the Town and Country magazine for 1773.

certained beyond a doubt, the consequences were obvious and unavoidable. Of such a proposal there could be but one opinion. The public canvassed it with the utmost freedom: Mr. Foote introduced the Doctor on his stage in the character of *Dr. Simony*, and his Majesty, justly resenting this attempt on the integrity of the "keeper of his conscience," ordered the name of the offender to be struck out of the list of chaplains. All that he could urge, or ever has publicly urged, in his defence, is contained in the following letter to the printer of one of the evening papers:

"Sir,

May I earnestly intreat, through the channel of your paper, that the candid public will suspend their sentence in my case? under the pressure of circumstances exceedingly adverse, and furnished with no proofs of innocence but which are of a negative nature, there is left for me at present no mode of defence but that of an appeal to a life passed in public service, and an irreproachable attention to the duties of my function. How impossible it is to oppose these to the torrent of popular invective, the world will judge: it is hoped,

G

how,

however, that time will, ere long, put some circumstances in my power which may lead to an elucidation of this affair, evince to the satisfaction of mankind my integrity, and remove every ill impression with regard to the proceedings, which have justly incensed a most respectable personage, and drawn such misfortunes upon me.

Queen-street,
Feb. 10, 1774.

William Dodd."

It is needless to add, *that time* never came. His endeavouring, as has been suggested, to throw the blame on his wife, we hope was an aspersion. If this however had been his last and greatest offence, or if his distress and disgrace had terminated here, he would, comparatively, have been happy. Instead of giving the public the satisfaction they required, he hastened over to Geneva, and obtained his noble pupil's presentation to the vicarage of Wiage in Bucks, then just vacant, holding it by dispensation with Hockliffe. At this time he is supposed to have had about eight hundred pounds a year in preferments. If he had then left the town, disposed of his chapels, and retired to one

*The most important part of
wantonly torn out.*

imperfect

[47]

with confidence to rely. He who compounded the small debts of others, has contracted a debt which none but the Saviour of all can ransom and pay. He whose bounty so often released the prisoner, and encouraged others to *do likewise*, has been immured in a prison, from which death only could release him, and in some measure depended for support on that beneficence which he had so frequently excited and constantly displayed: He who, in some instances, was the humane instrument of restoring, as it were, the dead to life, to their families and friends, was reduced to the dreadful necessity of envying the wretch who was drowned past recovery; of wishing that an accidental death had been his own portion, or that the highwayman's pistol had not missed its aim*. Even the well-meant but fruitless endeavours of his friends to save him, the straws, at which, in his last struggles, he was induced to catch, by encouraging delusive hopes, served only to aggravate his disappointment, and to divert his thoughts from

* See page 39.

the

the only pursuit that could avail him. Yet through this darkness the eye of faith may discern a dawning of consolation; time, farther time, has been gained for self-recollection, and his suffering thus usually severe in this world, thus imbit-tered by reflections on what he was and what he might have been, and above all, by that poignant sensibility, sharper than a two-edged sword, of which the generality of criminals have no idea, may lead to a humble presumption that with this world his miseries have ceased. Add to this, the offense, though atrocious, was temporal; its pernicious effects extended not to the world of spirits, of whose treasures no fraud can deprive us; and for the injury done to society by the scandal and example, society has exacted and received an atonement. Though human tribunals are, in such cases, necessarily rigid and inexorable, of the divine tribunal, where an all-sufficient sacrifice has been offered, lenity is the characteristic; mercy is the darling attribute. There, the good that this offender has done will *rise up as incense*, the many that he *turned to righteousness*, will plead for him

him trumpet-tongued. Such, we know, is the endearing language of the gospel; such are the faith and hope delivered to the sons of men by him, who, when he assumed our nature, pitied and forgave and received returning sinners, of HIM, who accepted the tears of his fallen apostle, and took the penitent thief with him into paradise *.

* All that Dr. Dodd has offered in his own defence is collected in the Appendix.

H

AP-

A P P E N D I X.

Dr. DODD's *Defence before the Lord Mayor*, Feb. 8, 1777.

“ I Cannot tell what to say in such a situation. I had no intention to defraud Lord Chesterfield; I hope his lordship will consider my case; I was pressed extremely for three hundred or four hundred pounds to pay some tradesmens bills; I meant it as a temporary resource; I should have repaid the money in half a year;—I have made satisfaction, and I hope that will be considered: my Lord Chesterfield must have some tenderness towards me; he knows I love him; he knows I regard his honour as dearly as my own; (*here he wept bitterly*) I hope he will, according to that mercy that is in his heart, shew clemency to me; there is nobody wishes to prosecute; pray, my Lord Mayor, consider that, and dismiss me, Mr. Robinson is certainly innocent.”

Verses

Verses written by him in Prison.

Amidst confinement's miserable gloom,
 'midst the lone horrors of this wretched room;
 What comforts, gracious Heaven! dost thou bestow,
 To sooth my sorrows, and console my woe!
 A wife, beyond the first of womankind,
 Tender, attach'd, and e'en to death resign'd?
 Dear youthful friends, in life's ingenuous hour,
 As children zealous to exert each power!
 Men skill'd in wisdom's most sagacious lore,
 Solicitous to aid, to save—restore!
 Lawyers and counsellors without a fee,
 Studious to guide, direct, and set me free!
 Nay—from the *men* I falsely deem'd my foes,
 The ready offer of all service flows:
 While *Gratitude*, in guise unknown, draws nigh,
 Says “I was kind,” and renders her supply!
 —Above the rest, my keepers, sooth'd to grief,
 With sympathetic pity, give relief:
 Treat, as a guest, the sufferer they revere,
 And make it even *tranquil* to be *here*!
 Great God of mercy! if, amidst my woes,
 A stream of such peculiar comforts flows;
 Flows full, flows only from thy care divine,—
 May I not humbly, firmly, *LORD*, resign—
 And trust the issue to thy care alone?
 Yes, *LORD*, I trust, “O may thy will be done!”

Wood-street Compter,
 Feb. 16, 1777.

Dr.

Dr. DODD's Defence at the Old Bailey,
Feb. 22, 1777.

“ IT is extremely difficult for me to speak against the evidence which has been produced against me. No man is more sensible than I am of the heinousness of the crime which is imputed to me, nor more aware of its general perniciousness to the state. But I trust it will be considered and admitted by your lordships and the gentlemen of the jury, that the moral turpitude and intrinsic criminality of any action depends, in the eye of the law, reason and religion, on the *intention* of the person who commits it. I am no lawyer; but I am informed that this is the express idea of all the acts of parliament on the subject, that there must be “an intent to defraud,” to constitute the crime. That I had no such intent, I trust will appear from every circumstance: That I did not do so, is proved by the witnesses against me, for I made instant and complete retribution. No injury was intended to any man; none has been sustained by any man. Ample satisfaction was offered, and was accepted. In such circumstances what more could be done?
What

What more could be required of me by God or man? And if your lordships, and gentlemen of the jury, will please to consider the circumstances in which I have been entangled in this transaction, I cannot doubt of your just indulgence to me: circumstances of persecution and oppression! For though I acknowledge, with gratitude, the candour which I have experienced in this court, yet I must complain of the previous conduct, and the steps which brought me hither. I have been pursued with oppressive severity. Notwithstanding the most solemn assurances, the most express engagements, the most soothing and delusive promises from Mr. Manley, who now appears on the prosecution, that there should be none, yet do I now stand in this situation: and, what I believe is an instance unprecedented in matters of this nature, and circumstanced as this is, a prisoner, who was committed with me for the same imputed offence, has been brought up without authority, and admitted a capital witness against me. Your lordships cannot think that life is now the object of my care. Loaded with imputed infamy, sunk in distress, overwhelmed with every sort of anguish, no one can imagine that I wish to live.

live. No: I solemnly protest that death would be now the greatest blessing to me. But I have other ties; which if I were permitted to describe—which I feel so tenderly affixed to my heart—which I know, from the sympathy of humanity, you will feel with me. I have a wife! For *twenty-seven** years she has lived with me, and blessed me! The brightest pattern of unparalleled attachment and fidelity! And in this most trying situation, her peculiar tenderness and anxiety of attachment would draw tears of approbation even from the most inhuman. Let me then trust, my lords, and gentlemen of the jury, that you will judge of me according to my intentions. They were just and fair. I meant, fully and certainly meant, to replace the money in a few months. So I told Mr. Robinson at the time; desiring of him, and expecting, that the transaction should be known to none but him and Mr. Fletcher. If then it appears that no mischief hath happened; that not even any inconvenience hath been sustained; but that complete satisfaction hath been made; if it appear that there hath been no injury, in-

* See note on p. 3.

tentional or real; I remain in your lordships hands, and with you, gentlemen of the jury, confiding in your merciful determination, and throwing myself with contented resignation on the justice and humanity of my country."

*Dr. DODD's Speech at the Old Bailey,
May 16, 1777, before Sentence of death
was passed upon him.*

*Dr Johnson was the
author of this speech*

" My Lord,

" I now stand before you a dreadful example of human infirmity: I entered upon public life, with the expectation common to young men whose education has been liberal, and whose abilities have been flattered. And when I became a clergyman, I considered myself as not impairing the dignity of the order. I was not an idle, nor, I hope, an useless minister; I taught the truths of Christianity with the zeal of conviction, and the authority of innocence. My labours were approved; my pulpit became popular; and, I have reason to believe, that of those who heard me, some have been preserved from sin, and some have been reclaimed. Condescend, my lord,

lord, to think, if these considerations aggravate my crime, how much they must embitter my punishment.

“ Being distinguished and elated by the confidence of mankind, I had too much confidence in myself; and thinking my integrity,—what others thought it—established in sincerity, and fortified by religion, I did not consider the danger of vanity, nor suspect the deceitfulness of my own heart. The day of conflict came, in which temptation surprised and overwhelmed me! I committed the crime, which, I entreat your lordship to believe, that my conscience hourly represents to me in its full bulk of mischief and malignity. Many have been overpowered by temptation, who are now among the penitent in Heaven!

“ To an act, now waiting the decision of vindictive justice, I will not presume to oppose the counterbalance of almost thirty years,—(a great part of the life of man) passed in exciting and exercising charity; in relieving such distresses as I now feel; in administering those consolations which I now want. I will not otherwise extenuate my offence, than by declaring—what many circumstances make probable—that I did not intend to be finally fraudulent.

Nor

Nor will it become me to apportion my own punishment, by alledging, that my sufferings have been not much less than my guilt. I have fallen from reputation, which ought to have made me cautious; and from a fortune, which ought to have given me content. I am sunk at once into poverty and scorn: my name and my crime fill the ballads in the streets; the sport of the thoughtless, and the triumph of the wicked!

“ It may seem strange, my lord, that, remembering what I have lately been, I should still wish to continue what I am. But contempt of death, how speciously soever it might mingle with Heathen virtues, has nothing in it suitable to Christian penitence.

Many motives impel me to beg earnestly for life. I feel the natural horror of a violent death, and the universal dread of untimely dissolution. I am desirous to recompense the injury I have done to the clergy, to the world, and to religion; and to efface the scandal of my crime, by the example of my repentance. But, above all—I wish to die with thoughts more composed, and calmer preparation!

“ The

“ The gloom and confusion of a prison, the anxiety of a trial, and the inevitable vicissitudes of passion, leave not the mind in a due disposition for the holy exercises of prayer and self-examination. Let not a little life be denied me, in which I may, by meditation and contrition, prepare myself to stand at the tribunal of Omnipotence, and support the presence of that Judge, who shall distribute to all according to their works; who will receive to pardon the repenting sinner; and from whom the merciful shall obtain mercy.

“ For these reasons, my lord, amidst shame and misery, I yet wish to live; and most humbly implore, that I may be recommended by your lordship to the clemency of his Majesty.”



F I N I S.